

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Board of Forestry and Fire Protection – Range Management Advisory Committee

RANGELANDS FOCUS GROUP

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting held Tuesday, May 3, 2010, 3:00pm
Resources Building, 1416 9th Street, 15th floor, Room 1506-12
Sacramento, California

Attending:

RMAC:

Charles Pritchard, Chair
Bart Cremers, Vice-Chair
Scott Carnegie
Clancy Dutra
Mel Thompson
Ken Zimmerman
Marc Horney (by phone)
Leonard Hale

Representing:

California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF)
California Forestry Association (CFA)
California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF)
California Wool Growers Association (CWG)
California Cattlemen's Association (CCA)
General Public
Watershed Council of Southern California (WCSC)

Eric Huff (staff)

California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

Members of the Public:

Karen Buhr

Representing:

California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Item 1: Call to Order

Focus Group Chairman Pritchard called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m. and began with introductions of meeting participants.

Item 2: Continued Discussion of Williamson Act Program Status.

Chairman Pritchard reported that the status of the Williamson Act subvention funds has not changed. The Chairman noted that the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors has drafted a letter to the Governor expressing strong support for the Williamson Act and he read the letter to the Focus Group participants. The letter documents the significance of agriculture as an economic driver in the County. It further emphasizes the role that agricultural lands play in achieving the environmental values supported by the Governor.

The Chairman directed the Group to a draft letter to the Board of Forestry & Fire Protection Chairman, Stan Dixon. The letter is intended to solicit the assistance of the

The Range Management Advisory Committee is a statutorily authorized advisory committee appointed by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Committee is responsible for assisting the Board in the review and development of statewide rangeland policy and serves as an advisor to the California Natural Resources Agency, Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Food and Agriculture on issues pertaining to California rangeland resources.

Board in lending support for the restoration of Williamson Act subvention funding. The Group debated the utility of sending such a letter and discussed possible actions that the Board could take in response.

Upon conclusion of the discussion, a number of edits were made to the draft letter and staff was directed to provide a revised version of the draft for possible action at the full RMAC meeting on the following day.

Item 3: New and Unfinished Business.

RMAC Chairman Zimmerman reported on his participation at the field day held at Member Mel Thompson's Ranch and circulated a number of handouts from the day.

Focus Group Chairman Pritchard reported on the "Forestland Steward" article about the "Angora Fire" in the Tahoe Basin as well as the purchase of San Luis Obispo County lands to be added to Montaña de Oro State Park using public funds.

Focus Group Vice-Chair, Bart Cremers presented a revised set of Focus Group goals that included restoration of a previously identified goal focused upon "creation of management protocols for state owned lands."

RMAC Chairman Zimmerman brought up the persistent issue of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's (LADWP) use of unlicensed practitioners in the development of management plans for LADWP lands. The Chairman noted that LADWP's consistent response to date has been that their lands do not fit the definition of "forested landscapes" found in the Professional Foresters Law and therefore a licensed professional need not be retained. However, LADWP's "Owens River Valley Management Plan" runs counter to this as it identifies "riparian forests" among the vegetation types to be managed. Chairman Zimmerman forwarded this information to Member Horney.

Member Horney provided a brief report on his involvement with the Certified Rangeland Manager program as a member of the California-Pacific Section of the Society for Range Management's CRM Certification Panel.

RMAC Vice-Chair, Scott Carnegie presented Board Member, Doug Piirto's request that RMAC in cooperation with the Society for Range Management address the loss of range science undergraduate programs across the Western United States. Member Horney was prompted for his perspective on the status of undergraduate range programs. He noted that range science educational programs are tough to maintain because so much of the education occurs in the field rather than the classroom. Lab classes and field trips are much more expensive to fund than the typical classroom-only programming. He further observed that a compounding problem is that so many students are coming from urban or suburban backgrounds rather than rural landscapes and really need field experience to develop competency. He also intends to start a "Range Club" on campus at California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo. Focus Group Chairman Pritchard questioned if it could be helpful to solicit funding for student field opportunities from the local or state Cattlemen's Association, and other organizations. Member Horney supported this idea and offered to work with Focus Group Chairman Pritchard to follow up on that idea.

Item 4: Public Comment.

There was no public comment to report. The meeting was then adjourned by unanimous consent of the Focus Group participants.

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